

VZCZCXRO7761
RR RUEHAST RUEHDH RUEHHM RUEHLN RUEHMA RUEHPB RUEHPOD RUEHSL RUEHTM
RUEHTRO
DE RUEHBU #1316/01 3381351
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 041349Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0141
INFO ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE
MERCOSUR COLLECTIVE
RUEHCP/AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN 0008

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BUENOS AIRES 001316

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS
FOR WHA/EPSC - FRANCES COLON
ALSO FOR OES/EGC - DREW NELSON

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ECON](#) [ENRG](#) [KGHG](#) [SENV](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [AR](#)
SUBJECT: ARGENTINA: AMBASSADOR DELIVERS CLIMATE CHANGE TALKING POINTS
TO ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY; GOA POSITION UNCHANGED

REF: PERSHING-MARTINEZ CONCALL OF NOVEMBER 23
COLON-PEREZ E-MAIL OF NOVEMBER 27; BUENOS AIRES 1244

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The Ambassador delivered climate change talking points (ref A and B) on December 1 to Argentina's Environment Secretary Homero Bibiloni and Climate Change Lead Negotiator Silvia Merega. She stressed the importance of reaching a politically binding agreement in Copenhagen and highlighted the U.S. proposal for emissions cuts, but noted the need for robust actions by large emerging countries. Both Bibiloni and Merega expressed doubts about the USG's ability to deliver emissions cuts and funding for developing countries. The key to overcome this credibility gap, Bibiloni believed, is for the USG to put a clear funding proposal on the table, with specific amounts and rules for distribution, which would be open to mid-level countries and target not only mitigation but also adaptation. It is clear that the GOA's position remains unchanged (ref C). End Summary.

AMBASSADOR DELIVERS TALKING POINTS ON COPENHAGEN

¶2. (SBU) The Ambassador met on December 1 with Argentina's Environment Secretary Homero Bibiloni to deliver climate change talking points in ref A and B. Also present in the meeting were the MFA's lead negotiator for climate change, Ambassador Silvia Merega, and ESTHCouns. The Ambassador emphasized the importance of reaching a politically binding agreement at the Conference of the Parties (COP) in Copenhagen, pointing out that the alternative to such an agreement was no deal at all. She stressed the USG's commitment to emissions reductions, highlighting far-reaching pending legislation, but noted that the U.S. was also looking for robust actions by large emerging economies. She called on Argentina to work together with the United States in a pragmatic way to reach an agreement.

DOUBTS ABOUT THE U.S. ABILITY TO DELIVER

¶3. (SBU) Bibiloni and Merega expressed doubts as to the U.S. Administration's ability to deliver meaningful legislation. Given

what they perceived as a lack of meaningful action to date by the United States, they questioned the call for actions by emerging and mid-level countries, and were particularly opposed to the concept of an international registry. The message they relayed repeatedly was that, until the GOA has a clear idea as to how much funds will be available to developing countries, how the funds will be distributed, and what the rules will be, it will not discuss any possible actions. Argentina's position remains unchanged (ref C). Bibiloni also stressed that Argentina is interested in funding for adaptation rather than mitigation, "like most developing countries," he said. He questioned why, if the USG was willing to spend "billions of dollars to save the financial system," it was not willing to commit to a significant amount to save the planet.

THE KEY TO AN AGREEMENT: FUNDING FOR ADAPTATION

14. (SBU) Still, the GOA is looking for a win-win in Copenhagen, Bibiloni said, and funds for adaptation are the key to an agreement. He summarized the GOA's vision for an agreement as getting the answer to three "simple" questions: 1) how much money

BUENOS AIR 00001316 002 OF 002

will be available; 2) how quickly will funds be disbursed; 3) how much will be directed towards adaptation vs. mitigation. "If funding and technology are available," he said, "we can move forward." Merega stressed that funding should be available not only to poor countries but also to mid-level developing countries. She reiterated her opposition to an international registry of actions, when the U.S. is "still incapable to commit to actions through domestic legislation."

COMPOSITION OF THE ARGENTINE DELEGATION

15. (SBU) Asked about the composition of the Argentine delegation, Merega said she will be leading the delegation for the first week. Secretary Bibiloni will join her in Copenhagen for the second week, followed by Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana for the last four days. She added that it is possible, but not yet confirmed, that President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner would attend the last couple of days of the COP.

COMMENT: IT ALL COMES DOWN TO MONEY

16. (SBU) The message from Argentina's Environment Secretary and Lead Climate Change Negotiator was unambiguous. The GOA's position remains unchanged. Our interlocutors doubt the USG's ability to deliver emissions cuts because domestic legislation is still pending, and they question our commitment to assist mid-level developing countries because no specific amounts or mechanisms have been proposed. "It all comes down to money," as Bibiloni commented as he wrapped up the meeting.

MARTINEZ
MARTINEZ